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SUBJECT: FSC MARCH 25: RUSSIA CALLS FOR LIMITED REVISION OF VIENNA DOCUMENT

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Russian arms control delegation head Ulyanov told the March 25 Forum for Security Cooperation that half of the Vienna Document, last revised in 1999, was a "dead letter" and even its provisions for information exchange, inspections/evaluations, and contact visits were no longer robust and in danger of decaying into irrelevance. Reprising a theme he has argued for the last three years, Ulyanov asserted the only way the Vienna Document 1999 (VD99) could avoid "the fate of the CFE Treaty" would be immediate and rapid revision of some of its key portions, similar to what was done several times in the 1990s. Revision could be limited by an FSC decision that would reopen only certain paragraphs of VD99, set a fixed time limit, and underline that VD99 would remain in effect until revision was complete.

Greece cautioned that reopening VD99 could jeopardize all its provisions as the European security climate had changed since the early 1990s when it was first negotiated. The U.S. noted Russia itself had, despite its gloomy report, actively implemented Vienna Document verification provisions in 2008 and 2009.

¶2. (SBU) French MFA security policy DAS Audibert explained Paris' views for next steps on European security. Audibert minimized the significance of the recent French decision to rejoin the NATO military structure and insisted France had always been "Atlanticist," although some believed it had championed the European Security and Defense Policy to compete with NATO. European defense strategy will require continuing reliance on the "twin pillars" of NATO and the EU even though many European nations need to invest more in defense. Although France saw a major role for the OSCE in any new European security arrangement, considerable imagination and flexibility would be needed to surmount

frozen conflicts and restore the political-military acquis, including CFE. End Summary.

Who's Afraid of the Vienna Document?

13. (SBU) Russian arms control delegation head Mikhail Ulyanov said participating States responded warily, if not in outright panic, to his standing question why had the Vienna Document not been changed since 1999 when it had been amended four times in the first ten years of its existence. Ulyanov doubted the explanation proffered by the UK that the European political climate had changed since the document was first written. He recalled the Helsinki Final Act was created in the mid-1970s when the "common purpose" was presumably no greater. The Stockholm document on CSBMs was adopted in 1986. More recently, the adapted CFE Treaty was negotiated despite tense NATO-Russia relations in the wake of the Yugoslavia conflicts. The actual explanation, Ulyanov concluded, was a lack of political will compounded by diminishing interest in CSBMs. Many states, he said, are comfortable with the present document and allergic to anything that would limit their latitude for military action.

"A Dead Letter"

14. (SBU) These attitudes, Ulyanov warned, are at odds with current reality. Not all states are comfortable with the position that the Vienna Document performs well enough.

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Referring to an earlier Russian Food-for-Thought paper that reviewed each of the document's chapters (FSC.AIAM/2/09), Ulyanov asserted that at least half of the provisions were not functioning, "a dead letter," as exemplified by Georgia's recent refusal of a Russian inspection request. He added that pS submission under VD99 vary widely in the degree of detail, itself an "abnormal state of affairs." Atrophy of VD99 was part of a larger stalemate over the last decade in the core mandate of the FSC. Innovation is viewed by some as taboo even though change is acknowledged elsewhere as needed, as in discussions of European security architecture. "Yet while every howitzer was counted, naval forces were not even considered." Not only the Vienna Document, but the OSCE Document on SALW, Principles of Non-Proliferation, and Code of Conduct also are in need of serious review. If nothing were done, the document would completely cease to function within ten years.

Selective Pruning

15. (SBU) Anticipating the objection that reopening the Vienna Document would threaten the existing CSBM regime, Ulyanov assured that only selected sections need be considered, and this could be done without jeopardizing the rest of the document. Just a few new provisions were needed to update the document, including Russia's earlier proposals for information exchanges and notifications on naval forces and (with Belarus) multinational rapid reaction forces. Also, in Chapter IX on verification, a definition of "force majeure" was needed. The recent proposals by Norway on inspection quotas (FSC.AIAM/5/09) and Denmark on the size of inspection teams (FSC.AIAM/6/08) should also be considered, he said. Chapters V through VIII could be left intact, except that the definition of "major military activities" needed to be updated.

Immediate and Urgent Revision Needed

16. (SBU) Ulyanov assured that pS could agree in advance which provisions to reopen, and that protracted negotiations would be in no one's interest. He proposed a date certain by which any changes would have to be approved, e.g., before the

Athens Ministerial (in December). Review of the document should then occur every four or five years, as is done with core documents at the UN, the EU, and NATO. Ulyanov urged pS to begin revision immediately: it should become the main work of the FSC for the next two or three months if the document is to avoid "the fate of the CFE Treaty." Ulyanov asked that his presentation be considered as a Food-for-Thought and part of dialogue to ensure European security.

Allies and Others Resist

17. (SBU) While Belarus gave a blanket endorsement of the Russian position, Switzerland demurred that only the Vienna Document provisions on conflict resolution were moribund, largely for political reasons. Austria complained that it had attempted a review of the Code of Conduct in 2006 but lacked any support to go forward. The UK reminded that it had recently co-sponsored with Russia a draft Best Practices

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Guide on contact visits, hardly an example of inactivity. Latvia suggested the problem was lack of will, not an inadequate instrument.

18. (SBU) Germany (Kantorczyk) expressed general satisfaction with the Vienna Document, but conceded the Russian point that the document had not been revised since 1999, attributing this to the absence of the consensus present in the 1990s. Kantorczyk noted the document lacks a mechanism for regular review but revision should be undertaken when needed. Germany would be making its own proposal for improving the document soon. Germany did not share Ulyanov's pessimism about OSCE political-military documents generally: the Forum had recently agreed to undertake a review of the SALW document.

U.S.: VD99 Seems to Work for Russia

19. (SBU) The U.S. (Neighbour) countered that the discussion should not be whether to reopen the document but allow Russia to explain what issues it had with the document beyond some of the issues it had already raised that were discounted by other pS, e.g., its proposals on naval and rapid reaction forces. Neighbour said it was hard to understand Russia's assertion that VD99 was not working considering its own very heavy implementation of the document in 2008 and 2009.

110. (SBU) Greece (Sourani) repeated the common apprehension that revising any part of the document would entail reopening all of it. She asked delegations to recall their substantial revision efforts in 1995-1999, which led only to a chapter on regional measures. Responding to Ulyanov's claim that there were fewer notifications, she said the document was a victim of its own success in reducing tensions and building stability.

Allons Enfants

111. (SBU) French MFA DAS for security policy Jacques Audibert discussed European security on the eve of the NATO Summit. Audibert minimized the magnitude of the change represented by France's return to NATO's integrated military structure, asserting it had always been committed to the trans-Atlantic partnership and France never intended EU defense institutions to compete with NATO as events continue to prove that Europe needs the U.S. and vice versa. For the future, France will work to strengthen "the twin pillars" of European security, NATO and the EU, including the latter's European Security and Defense Policy.

OSCE a Keystone

112. (SBU) Acknowledging the problems at the OSCE with

continuing impasse over frozen conflicts and an "erosion of commitment" to the political-military acquis, he said France viewed the OSCE as a keystone of the European security structure, which should be based on the trans-Atlantic link; preservation of extant institutions including NATO, the EU, and the OSCE; a comprehensive, multi-dimensional concept of security including human rights; and renewed commitment to the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the 1990 Charter

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of Paris.

European Defense Deficits

¶13. (SBU) While noting that the NATO-EU partnership still needed work, Audibert said Europe's own defense efforts were still insufficient, noting perennial equipment and other shortfalls resulting from declining or static defense budgets. There was, he said, something wrong when two European countries had 75 percent of the airlift capacity of the EU. Nevertheless, he said the EU had proven its worth, citing its observer mission in Georgia, naval response to Horn of Africa piracy, and rule of law mission in Kosovo.

U.S. Needs Time

¶14. (SBU) Audibert added that any future European security arrangement would need to address new and emerging threats such as global warming, proliferation of WMD, energy security, terrorism, and cyber attacks. States would reaffirm their adherence to the principles of avoidance of force and the right to elect security arrangements. Regional conflicts had to be addressed and the CFE Treaty, although "not in crisis," should be restored to its central position in the European security architecture through adaptation and subsequent "modernization." To do this will require all parties to show imagination and flexibility. He cautioned that many states, particularly the U.S. with the change in administration, need time to take stock before committing to an OSCE summit.

SALW

¶15. (SBU) In the working group, the FSC chairman of the Informal Group of Friends of SALW (Schweizer, Germany) reported many delegations share a common understanding of the way ahead in fulfilling the 2008 ministerial decision to review the OSCE Document on SALW. At an informal meeting on March 19, most delegations agreed on a general approach instead of a "line-by-line" review of the document. Schweizer will circulate a notional work plan shortly that will draw from proposals made by delegations, including: descriptions of current OSCE norms and programs; support of related international organization and NGO efforts; and a major meeting by September. Schweizer described an emerging consensus for future work on brokering, end-use certificates, marking and tracing, and stockpile management.

Code of Conduct

¶16. (SBU) Responding to the latest revision of the draft decision for an update to the Code of Conduct questionnaire (FSC.DD/14/08/Rev.2), Belarus said it still preferred a "direct reference" to the "indivisibility of security" in preamble paragraph 3, despite a U.S.-suggested edit to the paragraph that quotes from Code paragraph 3 that "security is indivisible." In any case Belarus is still waiting for instructions.

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¶17. (SBU) Germany proposed editorial changes to questions II.4.1. and 4.3 and II.1.3., substituting "how does your state" for "how do you." Germany can accept the draft with just these changes, although it also repeated a recommendation that preamble paragraph 5 recalling the earlier technical update of the questionnaire (FSC.DEC/4/03) be deleted as superfluous.

¶18. (SBU) Turkey requested the word "any" be deleted from question I.1.4 soliciting information on "additional efforts" to combat terrorism. Russia immediately counter-proposed "possible" in place of "any." (Note: Turkey has consistently sought strengthening the obligation to provide this information, while Russia just as consistently has sought to dilute it. End Note.) The FSC Code coordinator (Eischer, Austria) may prepare another revision after consulting with delegations. If consensus appears likely, the chair will call a working group meeting before the plenary on April 1.

ASRC

¶19. (SBU) The chair (Lebedel, France) announced that Loic Simonet (France) would be the FSC chef de file for the Annual Security Review Conference (June 23-24). Lebedel also invited comment on his perception paper on the terms of reference for the chef de file (FSC.DEL/62/09). There was no further discussion of the paper.

Next Meeting

¶20. (SBU) The next and last FSC meeting under the French chairmanship will be on April 1.

SCOTT